

FCC chief asks care on media ruling

Michael Powell said his agency's decision on ownership must be fully substantiated.

By David Ho

ASSOCIATED PRESS

RICHMOND, Va. — The nation's top communications regulator said yesterday that, if the government failed to fully substantiate its looming decision on rules restricting media ownership, those findings would not survive court challenges.

"This is a rule-making that will be driven by evidence and not just intuition," Federal Communications Commission Chairman Michael Powell said. He said that, if the commission could no longer justify such a media ownership restriction, "the rule will go away."

The FCC is studying whether decades-old media ownership restrictions are suitable for a marketplace that has been transformed by satellite broadcasts, cable television and the Internet.

The time has come to get rid of those restrictions, John Sturm, president of the Newspaper Association of America, said at a hearing that the FCC held yesterday in this state capital.

Limits called outdated

The rule that prevents a company from owning a broadcast station and a newspaper in the same market is outdated, he said.

"The media world is totally different now as compared to when this ban went into effect in 1975," Sturm said in prepared remarks. He said cross-

and a broadcast station could enhance the quality and quantity of news and local information.

But not all newspapers oppose the ban.

Chris Powell, managing editor of the Journal-Inquirer in Manchester, Conn., said he attended the hearing to protest news media concentration in his state. He challenged arguments that the ownership rules were outdated because new kinds of media have changed the market.

"The state and local news advertising provided by the Internet and cable TV in Connecticut are negligible," he said.

Decision expected in May

The agency's five commissioners invited comments from the public and industry figures as one of the final steps in its review, which will probably be completed in May. It is widely believed that Powell and two other Republicans on the commission want to loosen the regulations.

David Croteau, a sociology professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, said in prepared remarks: "We have enough evidence now to serve as a warning. Less regulation will be a windfall for a few giant media corporations. It is likely to be a huge mistake for the rest of us."

A 1996 telecommunications law required the FCC to periodically review ownership rules in light of industry changes.

Media companies, including the owners of the four major commercial television networks, have asked the FCC to abolish the ownership rules, saying the regulations restrict their ability to grow and stay competitive.

Groups representing consumers, broadcasters, entertainers, and some media workers argue that the restrictions should remain to prevent a handful of giant companies from controlling what people watch, hear and read.

Regional earnings

Safeguard Scientifics Inc. (SFE)

NYSE	4 qtr '02 end 12/31	4 qtr '01 end 12/31	Pct chg
Rev (m)	\$438.8	\$401.1	+9
Net inc (m)	-\$31.2	-\$62.8	N.C.
Per share	-\$0.27	-\$0.54	N.C.
	12 mo '02 end 12/31	12 mo '01 end 12/31	Pct chg
Rev (m)	\$1,685.6	\$1,925.7	-12
Net inc (m)	-\$150.5	-\$499.1	N.C.
Per share	\$1.30	-\$4.27	N.C.

N.C. = not calculable

The Wayne holding company said it narrowed losses by selling its stakes in several companies. At the end of 2002, Safeguard had interests in 21 companies, compared with 26 at the end of 2001.

From the desk of

02-277

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MAR 12 2003
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att. Mr. Michael Powell

I am not a professional consumer
 a doctor, nor am I in the field
 of communications. I am an ordinary
 American citizen who is concerned with
 the many problems involved in
 running this wonderful country of
 ours. Your field of government is
 of course one of many, but each segment
 makes up the whole, so they are all
 equally important. Just as a matter
 of opinion, I would like you to
 know that I think our government
~~is the best of all~~
 the rest. We strive for excellence

LIST A B C D E

From the desk of

Martin J. Dubin

491 Old York Rd #202, Jenkintown, PA 19046

Phone: 215-881-9744 • Fax: 215-881-9745

and somehow never achieve it but
we still come up with the best that
the human experience can offer, bar none.
By the process of "Kismet," I had in
my hand an advertising piece sent
to me by Comcast, and I was going
to write to you when I saw the
enclosed article in the Phila. Inquirer
about the FCC's desire to reduce
the amount of restrictions as to the
acquisition of media stations.
I am very much against it for the
following. As a student of the
stock market, all of my life, I
have come to the conclusion that all
people are greedy, which includes you and me.

From the desk of

Martin J. Dubin

491 Old York Rd #202, Jenkintown, PA 19046

Phone: 215-881-9744 • Fax: 215-881-9745

Some are less greedy than others, but
the only problem with the business
scene here is that the multi-millionaires
~~and~~ only want one thing - more
millions. The small-individual
investor also only wants one thing -
more. This was the cause of the
historic collapse of the tech stocks
and the Enron, World-Com gigantic
debacle. In my opinion this is only
the beginning. The singer, Al Jolson,
sang a famous song entitled "You
Aint Seen Nothin Yet."

The enclosed Comcast advertising piece
in my opinion is deceptive advertising,
and they are famous for that.

From the desk of

Martin J. Dubin

191 Old York Rd #202, Larchmont, NY 10506

PHONE: 215-881-9744 • FAX: 215-881-9745

In my last letter I offered you
a limited number for 1999 per month.
Most people don't pay attention to
the phrase "for three months"; what
they mean is "for three months" you
know the answer but the company
has been reduced and when the three
months are up, they are either for
three or six days to come there.
The new expense method is new. The
younger generation are particularly
unacceptable to the reduction, just
as they are being reduced by the
not drink manufacturers (in the
substances which violate programs, as
they sell their money (pop!))

From the desk of

Martin J. Dublin

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PHONE: 215-881-9744 • FAX: 215-881-9745

Then in the time of the great
equal management with part
most detail, with them should be
what in fact is that they and the
most detail can "organ and set
person" - ask your doctor -
"What is the right operation and right operation?"
your attention to answer government
effectiveness in the operation of
make a little, well, in my opinion
let a try make. Comment on
perfect example. They have not
been content to manage the
TV cable business, with government
approval, but they are managing
the sports world in Philadelphia TV.

From the desk of

Martin J. Dubin

491 Old York Rd #202 Jenkintown, PA 19046

Phone: 215-881-9744 • Fax: 215-881-9745

All they want is more of everything,
Many years ago the Supreme Court
broke up the AT&T monopoly, and
to-day the consumer has many choices,
and is given a fair chance at choosing
his phone service. There is no choice
for the consumer in the Delaware Valley TV
market.
As the Chief government watch dog
for the communication field, I am
of the opinion that it is your sworn
duty to protect the consumer -
Please remember that in rendering
your decision.

Sincerely

M. J. Dubin

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EX PARTI OR LATE FILED

21 Crestwood Trail
East Hartford, Ct. 06118
March 3, 2003

Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Powell:

I urge you not to repeal the 1975 regulation prohibiting a company from owning a television station in the same area where it owns a newspaper.

The Tribune Co. of Chicago has violated the F.C.C.'s cross-ownership regulations because it owns The Hartford Courant, daily newspapers in Greenwich and Stamford, the Advocate chain of weekly newspapers in Hartford, New Haven, and Fairfield County, and the direct-mail advertising company in Hartford, Valu-Mail. It also owns WTIC-TV 61 in Hartford, and WTXN-TV 20 in Waterbury.

We do not need a monopoly in the news media. We need diversity.

Yours truly,
Florence E. Rassa
Florence E. Rassa

02-277

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

AIMEE LOISELLE
87 POTASH HILL ROAD
CUMMINGTON, MA 01026
(413) 634-0122

Michael Powell, Chair
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Confirmed

March 3, 2003

MAR 2 1 2003

Distribution Center

Dear Mr. Powell:

I know the FCC has initiated many proposals. However, I want to focus on concentration of the media. Please do not take our public resource, our public airways, and allow them to rest in the hands of a few corporations.

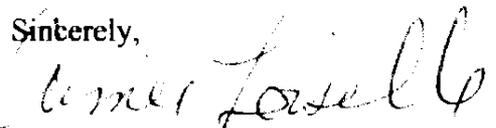
You only need to look at the results for radio to realize that the American people must rely on the FCC for protection of its public information sources. We depend on the airways and the diversity of newspapers for the transmission of information and expression of ideas. Without that variety, the whole of the democratic republic suffers; a lack of access hinders the education of its participating citizens and limits our ability practice freedom of speech.

You have voiced concern about the concentration of radio. It has not and will not work. A handful of corporations like Clear Channel have reduced news coverage, eliminated most local access, and put a great distance between resources and the public.

Concentration does not make the spread of information and ideas more efficient. It constricts the flow and grants private companies the power to control our public resources. Public airways are there for the sake of democratic practice, not for profit. The FCC should foster the independence of print and newspapers as a counterbalance to narrow radio sources.

Profit does not equate with the public interest. They are two separate entities, which the FCC is supposed to monitor to make sure the two are working in tandem. To confuse the two, and assume that making a profit indicates practices benefiting the public interest, is a mistake.

Please protect our public resources. I hope you will serve as a responsible and careful chair who recognizes the need for a cautious FCC that assumes its role as protector of democracy not reckless manipulator of public resources.

Sincerely,

Aimee Loisel

Michael Powell, Chairman
FCC
445 12th St. NW
Washington, DC 20554

Confirmed

MAR 21 2003

Mr. Powell,

Distribution Center

I read newspaper article concerning the hearing on the removal of the rules on media monopolies. I am outraged at your position which supports yet another way for mega corporations to determine the laws and policies and politics of this country.

You are quoted as saying that the only thing you care about is if it's good or bad for consumers. How can monopolies in every other industry be bad for consumers but in the media industry monopolies suddenly are good? You know that doesn't make sense but you are determined anyway. Monopolies in any industry are damaging to the consumer but most especially are monopolies damaging in the media industry. Evidence is the radio industry where every station broadcasts Rush Limbaugh and no other voice is heard. I do not want this to happen to any other media, in fact I want the radio monopolies broken up. Evidence of the influence of monopolies on the politics of this country is the fact that so little has been published in my area where the Tribune is king. Only one paper, the Journal Inquirer, has made this critical information available, along with contact information. People I know that get most of their information from television are clueless. This is all the evidence I need that monopolies will pervert the news, hide information that the citizens need to be aware of what their politicians are doing. Without the free distribution of news and information, democracy will be a joke.

You may feel that "consumers" will not be harmed by media monopolies but your primary concern ought to be the for the American citizen who wants a strong and active democracy. Mega corporations with monopolies of the media are willing tools for corrupt and secretive governments. This cannot be allowed.

Sincerely,

Barbara Contois

02-277

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Ann Zitkus
91 West Street
Hebron, CT 06248

March 2, 2003

Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. NW
Washington, DC 20554

confirmed
MAR 2 2003
Distribution Center

Dear Mr. Powell,

I am writing to urge your commission not to deregulate the communications industry for the following reasons.

- The very freedom of a democratic society is based on a well-informed public making decisions based on a wide variety of news sources.
- When fewer corporations dominate greater portions of the information targeted to the public, the public receives less of a variety of news sources. This can result in uninformed decisions and a dogmatic public opinion.
- The regulations concerned were put into place in the 1940's to guard against dogmatic public opinion. After World War II the U.S. government recognized that limited news sources had caused dogmatic public opinion and that this had been a factor in aggression by entire countries.

If the FCC ignores the above and deregulates this industry, megacorporations will be able to shape public opinion (as the public will have less exposure to a variety of information sources).

I consider the deregulation of the communications industry as an indication that those currently in political power promote the ability of megacorporations to control our democracy.

Sincerely,

